



## CONVOCAATION HEARS VISION UPDATES, AFFIRMS DECISIONS ON OFFICE AND ASSISTANTS

The 2021 NALC Mission Convocation heard updates on the 10 points of the NALC's 2020 Vision and overwhelmingly approved two resolutions supporting decisions by the Executive Council to establish a central NALC office in the Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas, area and to add four part-time assistants to the bishop.



**More than 400 people attended the 2021 NALC Mission Convocation at the American Bank Center in Corpus Christi, Texas.**

More than 400 delegates and visitors gathered August 4-6 in Corpus Christi, Texas, for the 2021 Mission Convocation around the theme, "God the Father Creates." The convocation and the events preceding it comprise the NALC's biennial Lutheran Week.

The convocation revolved around the 10 points of the 2020 Vision. Each vision point was highlighted with oral and written reports. Opportunities for discussion of each point and questions from delegates were provided.

"The vision is putting on paper where we believe God is leading us," Bishop Dan Selbo said. "The vision sets priorities. It also sets boundaries."

Bishop Selbo suggested that delegates think of the vision as a whole — rather than 10 parts.

He said there are "two basic truths behind the vision: 1. If it's not of God we have no hope. If it is of Him, we need to commit to it. 2. God will only do through the church what we are committed to do through Him."

Much of the discussion by delegates focused on point five of the vision — "A strategy for continental restructuring able to expand based on denominational growth."

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The convocation overwhelmingly approved a resolution stating that it “supports the Executive Council’s plan to have four NALC pastors as quarter-time assistants to the bishop who will serve to expand the bishop’s ministry to mission districts, deans, pastors and congregations in their respective geographic areas.”

Convocation delegates also approved a second resolution stating that it “supports the Executive Council’s plan to establish a central denominational office in the Dallas-Fort Worth metro area.”

The plans for new assistants to the bishop and central office would be implemented as funding becomes available.

The NALC is beginning a vision appeal to raise money to fund the 2020 Vision. The NALC is working with Cramer & Associates from Dublin, Ohio, a Christian-based philanthropic advisory firm, to execute this powerful and important initiative.

Detailed reports on each of the vision components are in the convocation program which is available online at [lutheranweek.com](http://lutheranweek.com).

The convocation approved a \$2 million Operating Budget for the NALC. Budgets were also approved for the church’s designated funds: \$875,000 for the Theological Education Fund (which includes the North American Lutheran Seminary); \$215,500 for the Great Commission Fund; and \$143,000 for the Disaster Response Fund.

The convocation unanimously approved a resolution inviting NALC pastors, congregations and members to unite in “intentional and intensive prayer for Ethiopia.” Ethiopia is going through a time of significant political unrest. The NALC is in a full-communion relationship with the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, the largest Lutheran church in the world.

Amendments to the NALC Constitution adding language naming mission districts and mission regions were approved. The amendments must be ratified by NALC congregations.



***Bishop Dan Selbo installed the Rev. Dr. Amy Little as NALC general secretary and the Rev. Mark Werner as a member of the NALC Executive Council during the closing worship service of the convocation.***

Congregations have been sent information about the ratification process for the amendments.

Reports of the work of the NALC’s staff, teams, task forces, ministries and ministry partners were warmly received.

The Rev. Dr. Amy Little was installed as the general secretary of the NALC during the closing worship service. The general secretary is the chief operating officer of the NALC and manages its administrative functions.

The Braaten-Benne Lectures in Theology, which preceded the convocation, focused on God the Father. Other events of Lutheran week included the Women of the NALC Annual Gathering and workshops on discipleship, stewardship and youth ministry.

Documents, photos and videos from the convocation and other events of Lutheran Week are available online at [lutheranweek.com](http://lutheranweek.com).





*The Rev. Dr. Steven Paulson of the Luther House of Studies at Sioux Falls Seminary delivered a keynote study on Martin Luther's explanation of the First Article of the Apostles' Creed from the Small Catechism.*

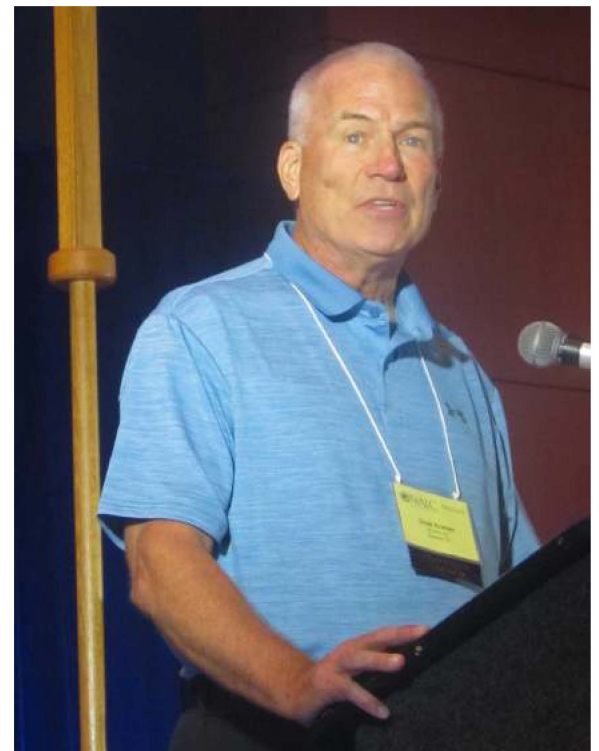


*The Rev. Dr. Eric Riesen, president of the North American Lutheran Seminary (NALC) and Donna Evans, chair of the NALC Board of Regents, presented a report on the seminary network and its vision component.*

## 2021 NALC MISSION CONVOCATION



*The Rev. Dr. Gemechis Buba, assistant to the bishop for missions, was the preacher for the closing worship service. He also addressed the vision point on mission outreach and congregational multiplication.*



*Scott Kramer of Boerne, Texas, a member of the NALC Executive Council, explained the restructuring component of the vision.*





*The Rev. Nila Cogan presided at the opening service of Holy Communion. Pastor Cogan, pastor of St. Thomas Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hooversville, Pennsylvania, and Dunmyer Lutheran Church in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, served as chaplain for Lutheran Week.*



*Melissa Ohden told the moving story of her life as the survivor of a failed saline infusion abortion and now as an advocate for abortion survivors and pro-life policies.*



*The Rev. Will Hartfelder, chair of the Lutheran Week Planning Team, embraced Texas culture by donning a large hat for daily announcements.*



*Delegates joined in discussion of proposals from the Executive Council regarding restructuring including establishing a central office and adding part-time assistants to the bishop.*





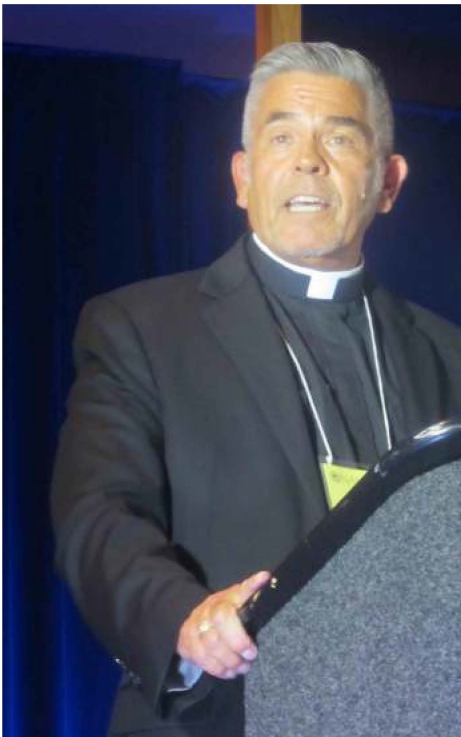
*The Rev. Phillip Gagnon, assistant to the bishop for domestic mission and discipleship, provided an update on the vision point on disciple-making congregations and cultures.*



*The Rev. Andrew Ames Fuller, director of communication, addressed the vision point on communication.*



*Mary Bates, disaster response coordinator, provided an update on the work of NALC Disaster Response.*



*The Rev. Dr. David Wendel, assistant to the bishop for ministry and ecumenism, addressed vision points on pastoral ministry, continuing education and ecumenism.*



*Speakers for the Braaten-Benne Lectures in Theology were, from left, the Rev. Dr. Ray Sutton, Dr. Paige Hochschild, the Rev. Dr. Eric Riesen, the Rev. Dr. Amy Schiffrin, the Rev. Dr. Nathan Yoder, and the Rev. Dr. Patrick Henry Reardon.*





# MISSION CONVOCATION ELECTS MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND COURT OF ADJUDICATION

The 2021 NALC Mission Convocation elected one lay person and one pastor to the NALC Executive Council and two members of the Court of Adjudication – all to four-year terms.

The Rev. Mark Werner of Pittsgrove, New Jersey, and Joel Williams of Erwin, South Dakota, were elected to the NALC Executive Council.

Joel Williams is the director of enrollment and donor services for the Institute of Lutheran Theology in Brookings, South Dakota. He previously served as national sales manager for a lighting and sign company. He is a graduate of North Dakota State University and a member of Badger Lutheran Church in Badger, South Dakota.

Pastor Werner serves as pastor of Emanuel Lutheran Church in Elmer, New Jersey. He has master's degrees from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

The Executive Council functions as the board of directors for the NALC, providing leadership for the church between convocations.

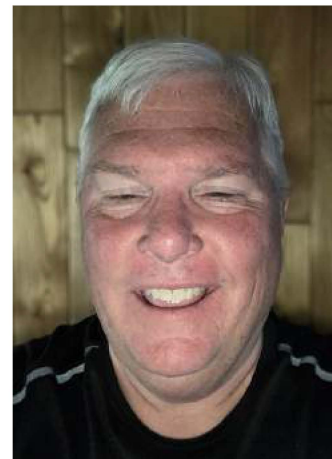
The Rev. Dr. Jeffray Greene of Brooks, Georgia, and Matthew Lind of Bainbridge Island, Washington, were elected to the Court of Adjudication.

Matthew Lind is a member of Port Madison Lutheran Church on Bainbridge Island, Washington. He is a partner in the law firm Sherrard McGonagle Tizzano & Lind in Poulsbo, Washington. He is a graduate of the University of Washington and has a law degree from Seattle University.

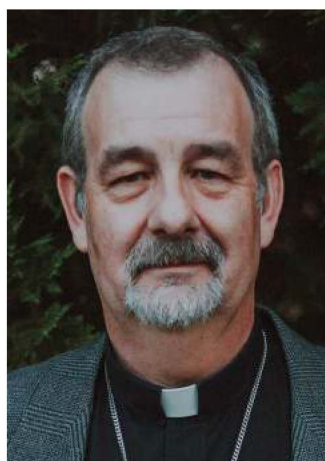
Pastor Greene is currently serving as interim pastor of Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church in Manistee, Michigan. He is a graduate of California State University and Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary.



*Mark Werner*



*Joel Williams*



*Jeffray Greene*



*Matthew Lind*

He has a Ph.D. in church governance from Trinity College and Seminary. He is a member of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Fayetteville, Georgia.

The Court of Adjudication decides questions regarding the interpretation of NALC governing documents and hears accusations that someone has violated those documents and appeals from disciplinary decisions.

The convocation also confirmed the election of members of the 2022 Nominating Committee.



# 2022 BUDGETS APPROVED

The 2021 NALC Mission Convocation approved a \$2 million Operating Budget for the North American Lutheran Church for 2022.

Budgets were also approved for the church's designated funds: \$875,000 for the Theological Education Fund (which includes the North American Lutheran Seminary); \$215,500 for the Great Commission Fund; and \$143,000 for the Disaster Response Fund.

The Theological Education Fund and Great Commission Fund budgets anticipate spending some cash reserves in those designated funds – budgeting expenses greater than anticipated income.

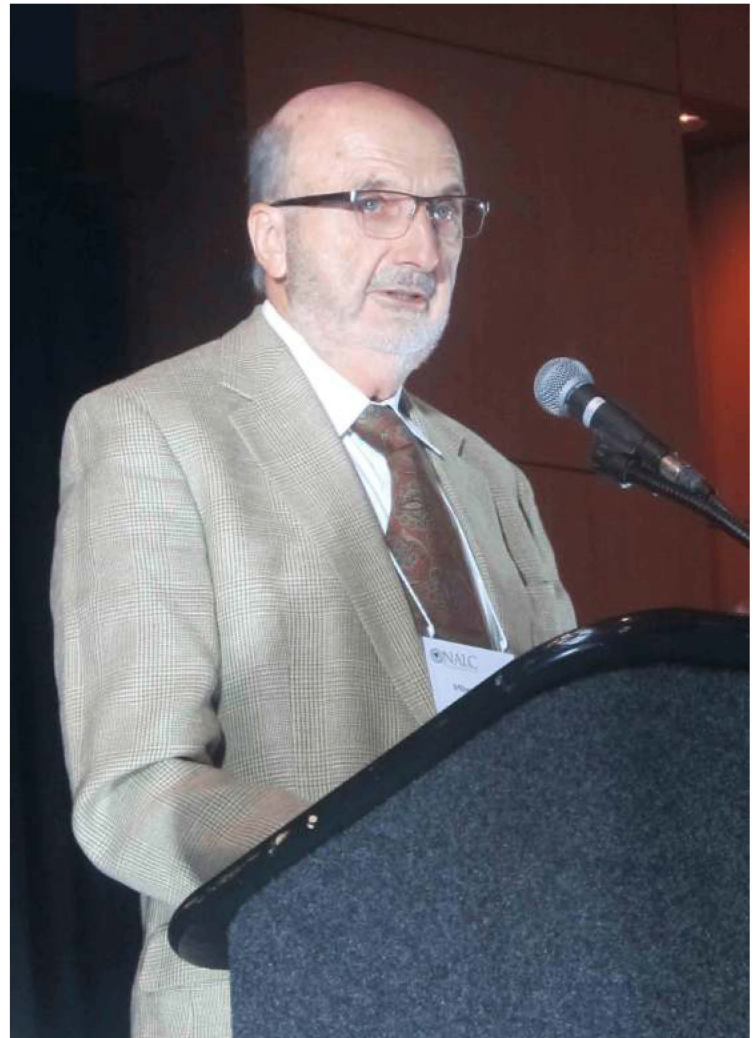
C. Michael Johnson, NALC treasurer, reported that total donations to the Operating Fund in 2020 were \$1.95 million – exceeding budgeted income by 6 percent. “Given the COVID-19 restrictions on churches being able to assemble, the donation growth stands as a testimony to the faithfulness of God’s people and their support of the NALC,” Johnson said.

Total expenses for 2020 were 17 percent lower than budget – mostly because of reductions in travel and meeting expenses.

Operating income for 2021 was running ahead of budget for the first half of the year.

In addition to benevolence giving through the NALC, congregations are encouraged to support at least one local, one domestic and one global mission. The NALC encourages congregations to support local and global mission directly.

The NALC Constitution asks the Executive Council to report to the convocation the percentage of congregational giving required to fund the general budget. The council again reported that 5 to 8 percent of congregational income would be necessary to fund the Operating Fund budget.



***C. Michael Johnson, NALC treasurer, speaks to the 2021 NALC Mission Convocation.***

The NALC is beginning a vision appeal to raise money to fund the *2020 Vision*. Giving to the appeal is separate from the NALC’s budgets and will directly support the vision. The NALC is working with Cramer & Associates from Dublin, Ohio, a Christian-based philanthropic advisory firm, to execute this powerful and important initiative.

A variety of financial reports are available on the NALC website including current and previous budgets, treasurer’s reports, audited financial statements and staff compensation information. You can find the reports at [thenalc.org/financial-reports](https://thenalc.org/financial-reports).

# BISHOP SELBO'S REPORT TO 2021 MISSION CONVOCATION

My written report is found in your booklets. It hits on some of the high points from this past year, along with some of the challenges we faced. It is not my intent in this verbal report to do the same, but to offer a summary of what God has been doing in our midst over the past 12 months.

Looking back, it has now been two full years since I was elected to serve in this role. As I consider all that has happened with the pandemic and all the necessary changes that came as a result, these first two years were, in some ways, more challenging than I had expected. There is quite a lengthy list of things I and we never saw coming. At the same time, much of what I have been doing, and will do in the years ahead, is not too far from what I had imagined coming in.

I shared with you, two years ago, when I was first elected, one of my favorite and foundational passages of Scripture to which I often return, especially when things get rough, and I find myself wondering about what God might be doing. From the first chapter of the apostle Paul's letter to the Colossians, he speaks of the supremacy of Jesus over all things and of how, in Jesus, we as the Church find our purpose.

*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross (Colossians 1:15-20 ESV).*

As I look back on the events of this past year, the way in which our world was caught by surprise and off-guard by the global pandemic, I find assurance and comfort in the fact that God is never surprised or caught off-guard by anything. Consistent with this year's theme, God created, and He creates. God transforms and He renews. He remembers what has been. He knows what lies ahead. He is fully aware of what is needed now. And He works, at all times and in all things, in and through His Church, to carry out and fulfill His saving purposes.

As a result, we have a purpose, and we can go after that purpose with the confidence that we are on the winning side. We belong to Him. The Church belongs to Christ. In Jesus, all things work for God's glory. In Christ, all things have lasting meaning and purpose when done and lived in accordance with His will. Thus, we can be confident that our work is blessed, as we remain focused on the calling and commission given and entrusted to us by our Lord.

As I travel around our denomination and talk with pastors, I hear differing reports of what's happening in various parts. In the United States and Canada, there are as many unique situations as there are congregations within our church body. No one situation or setting is the same as another. What is the same is the fact that our pastors and lay leaders and congregations have made the most of the situations they have faced, and they have adjusted their ministries to ensure that the witness and proclamation of the Gospel remain central. I have heard countless stories and witnessed many positive signs indicating that God has used their efforts to bear fruit.

For those reasons, and more, I am proud of our pastors. I am humbled by the work taking place in our congregations. In spite of the challenges of this past

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year, God is working in and through us. Whatever you do, don't forget the lessons you learned this past year, as painful and as undesired as they might have been. Learn from them and use them and, in using them, trust that God will use you.

Among the highlights from this past year are the number of new congregations that are now part of our fellowship. Since our online convocation last year, 13 congregations have joined our church body and 29 additional pastors are now on our clergy roster. Some of these have come to us from predecessor church bodies. All of these have come as a result of the faithful witness to the authority of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions found in the North American Lutheran Church.

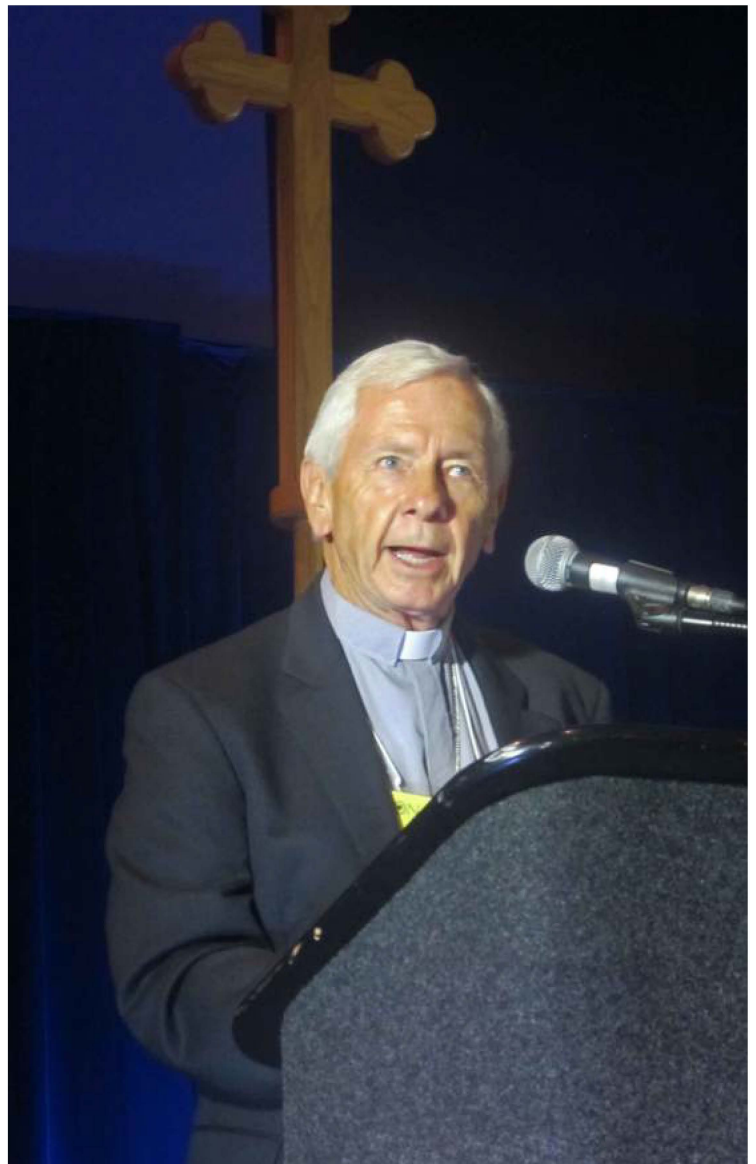
Let us not forget that our faithful and consistent witness is crucial to our outreach. We are not preaching a message that we have made up, have somehow come to believe, and that fits in with what the culture and the world around us believe to be true.

No, we are preaching and teaching about an historical figure, named Jesus, who lived 2,000 years ago on this planet called earth, and who claimed to be and who is and who was and who will always be the living God who created it all, and who gave His life on a cross so that we could have ours. He is the only way.

That witness and testimony is essential, not only to our continuing growth, but to our ability to attract and to reach people and congregations that are starting feel as if they have no church home.

Our outreach strategy is not focused on the reception of new congregations and members who have become unhappy in their previous church homes, although we want and need to be ready when those situations arise.

In that regard, I want to say a word of thanks to Pastor Mark Braaten who has been filling in, for the past few months, with the vacancy we've had in our general secretary position. Pastor Braaten's work has been with pastors and congregations interested in



***Bishop Dan Selbo speaks to the 2021 NALC Mission Convocation.***

joining the NALC. As I understand it, there are currently more than 50 congregations interested in becoming part of us. We need to be ready for them, as that happens, and we are.

At the same time, we need to be thinking ahead about how we can reach beyond those joining congregations and become more intentionally active in planting churches.

The work we do together, and the foundation of our outreach is rooted in the calling and commission of our Lord Jesus to reach out to all people with the saving and life-giving message found only in Him, and in the authority of His Word. This is the passion that

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drives our shared mission efforts and that keeps us centered and focused on that which unites us within the Church.

I continue to be encouraged by how we are, soon to be in our 12th year together, remaining true to the Core Values that have been foundational for us since the time we first formed.

**We are Christ Centered.** Jesus is at the heart of everything we do.

**We are Mission Driven.** It is the mission of our Lord and His Great Commission to us that drives the priorities we set and the work we do.

**We are Traditionally Grounded.** The Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions and the apostolic creeds serve to keep us firmly planted in the central truths of the Christian faith that will never change.

**And we are Congregationally Focused.** We are committed to supporting our more than 450 congregations in the ministry of Word and Sacrament because we believe and trust that is where and how the Holy Spirit works, through the preaching and teaching and living out of the Gospel, to call people to faith and to change and transform lives.

I am also encouraged by the progress we have made this past year in the development of our North American Lutheran Seminary. We now have agreements and understandings and working relationships with five different seminaries throughout North America, some of which have differing denominational roots. We are working to build a Lutheran track in each of these seminaries, designed to produce faithful and competent and well-educated Lutheran pastors, ready to meet the demands of a changed and a changing world.

I love the approach we are taking, being open to partnering with other Christian traditions on their already-existing campuses. Especially in a day and age like today, we need to be working as broadly and as faithfully as we can in the work we are doing, without compromising our Lutheran understanding

of the Scriptures and adjusting our theology to fit with what we think might work.

In that sense, I'm reminded of a quote from Charles Spurgeon who said, "There are, in truth, but two denominations upon this earth: the Church and the world." I believe he was right. The work we are doing will only work if we remain focused in Jesus. And we will only be found faithful and focused in Jesus, if we see our sisters and brothers in Christ as partners with us on the same team. I believe we are building a seminary training system that is poised to bear fruit because it is focused and centered in Christ.

A few other things worth mentioning: As we continue to grow in numbers of congregations, we need to continually be looking at and rethinking how we are functioning as a denomination. Many changes have taken place in the past several years to adjust to what God is doing as we have continued to grow. We are in the process of reviewing and reexamining a variety of operations and policies and procedures and strategies that have served us well but that might need to be adjusted as we move forward.

Examples of how we come at mission, what we need to do to increase our emphasis on discipleship and disciple-making, how we're approaching candidacy and the candidacy process for seminaries. These are just a few examples of where and how and why we cannot sit still and never be willing to change, especially when some of our old ways of doing things are not what's needed today.

I am convinced that the fields are "ripe for harvest" and God will use us to bring it in, but not without a lot of prayer and hard work. We need to be working hard and praying even harder for Him to guide us in hopes of staying up and maybe even getting ahead of where things are going.

On another front, we continue to have hopeful conversations with leaders in Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC). I know they, like us, have needed to stay focused on their own challenges this past year. I am praying that our conversations in the coming year will lead to a more fruitful and productive future together. I am laying this one 100 percent at the feet of our Lord.

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# BISHOP SELBO'S SERMON

## OPENING THE CONVOCATION

*Here is the text of Bishop Dan Selbo's sermon at the opening worship service of the 2021 NALC Mission Convocation.*

Dear friends, colleagues in ministry, brothers and sisters in Christ, greetings in the name of our God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

The theme for this year's mission convocation, "God the Father Creates," is a continuation of the themes that began in 2016, when the decision was made to dedicate two years to each of the three persons in the Trinity. The first two years were focused on God the Son. It was time well spent to center our gatherings around what God has done for us in Christ — not a unique focus for us in the Church, but one we dare not lose as we seek to be faithful.

The next two years were on God the Holy Spirit. It was reassuring to be reminded that we are never alone in this life. The Lord is always with us through His Spirit. It was also convicting and challenging to remember that we are nothing apart from Jesus, but in Him we have a place and a purpose in this life that will never change. We dare not forget.

And then, last year and this year, we were planning to finish the six-year cycle, giving two years to God as Father. But, as you know, we didn't meet like this last year. There was no opportunity for a theological conference to deal with the theme. So, we decided to postpone our focus on God the Father to this year and to our next in-person gathering in 2023.

When we first talked about how that was going to play out and about the option of condensing the two planned years into one, my first reaction was to conclude that one year would be enough.

And then, as others weighed in and offered counsel, and as my inherited Lutheran guilt began to take hold, I thought I would never want to stand before

the Father on Judgment Day and try to explain why I, as bishop, in my second year in office, had reduced His scheduled two years to one. And so, here we are, in the first of two years dedicated to God as our heavenly Father.

The theme, "God the Father Creates," is shaped as it is because the Father's creative activity never stops. The Father is always creating. The Father is always making things new. His creative work did not stop after the six days of creation were finished. In fact, it never stops.

Out of death, God still brings life. From suffering and pain, God continues to provide assurance and hope. The forgotten and forsaken are remembered. The lost and left-out are restored. All things become new, when placed in the hands of the living and creating God. And it all becomes real and is offered to us in the person and work of God's only Son, Jesus Christ.

And so, we begin our mission convocation with a reminder of the mission that was at the heart of the Father when He chose to send His Son into this world. And so, we come face-to-face with what is at the heart of the mission entrusted to us in Jesus, when He commissioned His followers to a task and a purpose that will never change. As so, we come to one of the most familiar and well-known Bible verses you will ever find, and to one of the most succinct and all-encompassing Bible passages there is.

If you want to know the heart of the Father, John 3:16 is a good place to start. Listen to what it says. "God so loved the world." God so loved the world.

Now, maybe that sounds simple and obvious, like a "Why even say it?" place to start. After all, why wouldn't He love the world? He is the one who created it. It's all His. Everything in this world belongs

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to God. Of course, He would love it. It naturally follows that He would – until you start digging a bit deeper, until you begin looking at what has happened and is found in the world. This is no longer the world God created, at least not consistent with His intent.

His intent was all good. At the end of the six days, that’s the pronouncement He made. “God saw all that He had made, and it was very good.”

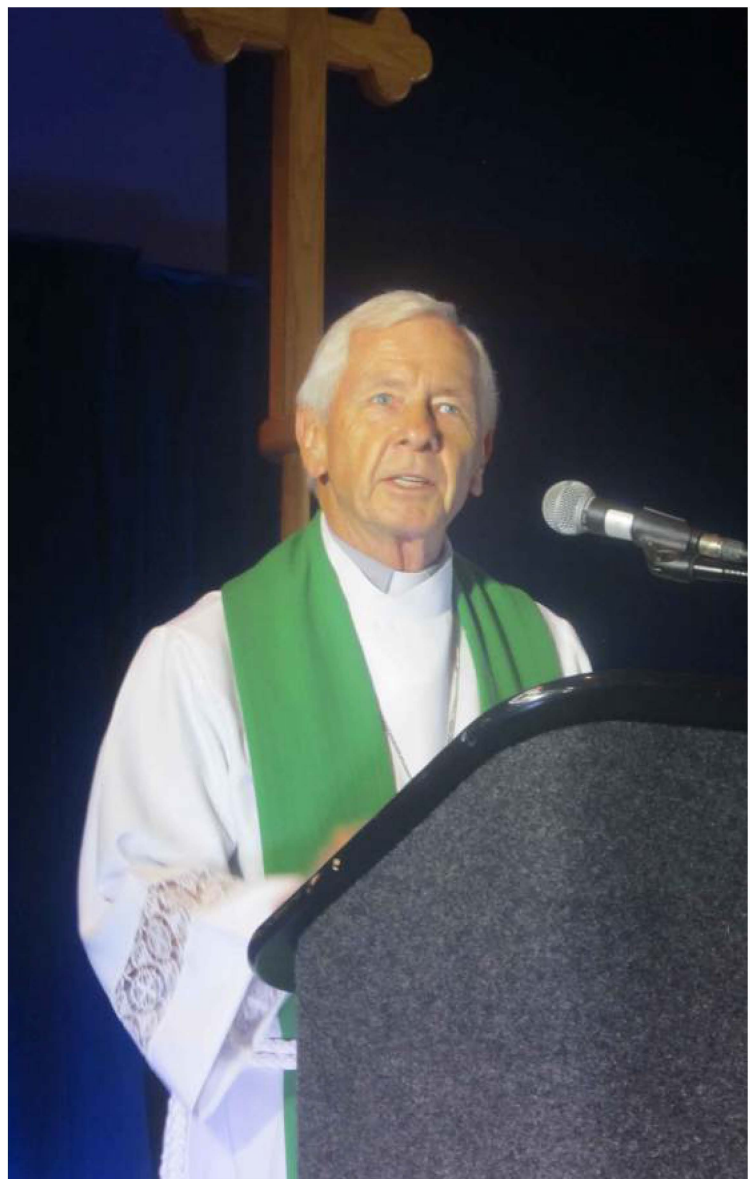
Do you remember how long that lasted? Two chapters. And that’s when the serpent showed up. That’s when the woman and the man gave in. And that’s when the world changed. And from that moment on, so did life.

When I was in the parish, we used to give our confirmation students a Bible overview. This is how I explained it to the kids. I said, “Open to Genesis chapter one.” This is the story of creation. Now, look at chapter two, and you’ll find a bit more of the detail about this perfect garden in which the first inhabitants of the world, Adam and Eve, were placed. Now, look at chapter three, and this is where we find the story of the first sin, and where it all began to unravel and fall apart.

Everything changed when sin entered the world. Everything was different as a result of Adam and Eve’s desire to be in control. What didn’t change was the love of God for His world. What will never change is the commitment and the promise given to us in Jesus.

Now, everybody look up here for a moment. Here’s the Bible in its simplest form. Chapters one and two, the story of creation. Chapter three, the story of the first sin and the curses that came as a result. The rest of the story is God putting it back together. The rest of the story is the creating and recreating work God has done, God has been doing, and that God will never stop doing until He calls it all to an end.

“God so loved the world.” Don’t ever doubt it. Don’t ever question it. Don’t ever wonder if His love includes you. It does, and it always will, and if ever there was a question about how far God’s love would go, the answer was given on a cross.



***Bishop Selbo preaching at the opening worship service of the 2021 NALC Mission Convocation.***

“God so loved the world that He gave His only Son.” Now, we could stop right there and sit for a moment and meditate on those few words. “God so loved the world that He gave His only Son.” He gave Him up. He let Him go. He offered Him as a sacrifice, so you and I could have ours.

That’s not the case with other religions. Many of this world’s religions follow gods to be feared. In some ways, we do too. Luther says we are to “fear, love and trust God above anything else.” There’s nothing wrong with a healthy fear. But if you want a definition of love, look to God. If you want a depiction of love, in its most genuine form, you’ll find it in Him.

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“In this is love,” John says, “not that we loved God, but that He loved us.” Paul says that our life’s goal ought to be to grow each day in, what he calls, “the breadth and height and depth” of God’s love.

God, so loved the world — the whole world, nothing left out. No one excluded. An undeserving world. A rebellious world. A world that had turned its back on its Creator. The Creator didn’t turn His back on the world. He created the world. He loved the world.

It doesn’t matter. It’s all within the scope of God’s love, everything, everyone. Black and white, red and brown, male and female, rich and poor, gay and straight, Republican or Democrat or one of the other political parties; atheist, agnostic, Christian; it doesn’t matter.

When Jesus hung on the cross, the entire world was being redeemed. That’s what happened. He bought it back. He paid the price. He took upon Himself our sin. Nothing and no one were left out.

God so loved the world that He gave. Don’t ever forget that. Love requires giving. No exceptions. No possibility without it. You can’t have the one without doing the other.

If you love your kids, you need to give. If you love your mom and dad, don’t forget. If you love your neighbor, it’s the same thing. You cannot love without giving. You cannot love without sacrifice.

This is more than an emotion, following Jesus. It’s more than what we feel inside, being a follower of Christ. “God so loved the world that He gave.” If He didn’t, He wouldn’t; but He does and so He did.

And what did He give? He gave His Son. He allowed His one and only Son to die so that we could live (Even Jesus said it). “No one takes my life from me. I lay it down of my will.”

Now, let’s stop for a moment and ask the question. I can’t answer for you; only for myself. Would I give my life for someone else? Would I be willing to die? I guess it all depends.

For my family? There’s no doubt. For those in my close circle of friends? I probably would. Would I give my life for each of you? I hope I would. I honestly don’t know. But would I give the life of one of my children for someone else? Would I sacrifice one of my own kids so that someone who didn’t deserve it could get off?

My friends, when we claim to be a Christ-Centered church body, those are not just nice words. Ours is a Christ-Centered faith. It all depends on Jesus. Everything stands or falls based upon His claims, and upon what He did. And it all has implications for us, and for how we are called to live as well.

All of the Old Testament builds up to it. All of the New Testament is a proclamation that it happened. If it didn’t happen, it didn’t happen. And if it didn’t happen, then it doesn’t work. The good news is that it does work, and it works because God was willing to give — and not just to give, but to give His only Son. And in giving His only Son, He is now calling us.

Let’s go back to our theme: “God the Father Creates.” The first article of the Apostles’ Creed says, “I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.” Do you remember what Martin Luther says about what it means? If you don’t, you should.

He says, “I believe that God has created me and all that exists. He has given me and still preserves my body and soul with all their powers. He provides me with food and clothing, home and family, daily work, and all I need from day to day. God also protects me in time of danger and guards me from every evil. All this He does out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, though I do not deserve it. Therefore, I surely ought to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.”

Did you hear it? One little word. Did you notice where this all leads? It leads to how you and I are called to live.

God has created us and all that exists. There’s nothing in this world that has not been fashioned and designed by Him. Everything we have, it all comes to us as a gift. Our bodies and our souls, our food and

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our clothes, our homes and our families, the work we do, the abilities we have, the fact that we are alive and breathing here today. It's all a gift, given to us by our Creating God.

Did you hear what it says? Do you understand what this all means and where it leads? One little word: "Therefore." "Therefore, I surely ought to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true."

I could be wrong, but this whole idea of God as Creator, the truth upon which everything else is built, it's so easy to confess it each week and after confessing it, fail to hear and understand what it means.

The first article of the creed not only declares who God is and what He is doing in this world, it also defines the Christian life, and it leads, if we're honest, to how you and I are to spend our lives.

This is as basic as it gets. This is as fundamental as it comes. The entire Christian life-ethic is laid out in a true understanding of the first words of our confession.

God is the Creator. We are the creatures. Everything we have and will ever have has been given to us as a gift and by His grace. Therefore, this is how we are to live. Therefore, this is what we need to do. Therefore, if we actually believe what we confess and trust in what God has done in Jesus, we have no choice.

The Great Commandment: to love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind, and a second: to love your neighbor as yourself. And the Great Commission: to go into the world and make disciples.

If we believe what we confess about the Father, and about how everything we have comes from Him, then we have no ethical choice that works, apart from offering our own lives in service of the work of the Gospel and the passing on of the faith to someone else.



***Bishop Selbo preaching at the opening worship service of the 2021 NALC Mission Convocation.***

We have no choice. And so, why don't we do it more often? Why are we so hesitant when the time comes?

Not long ago, I came across a Barna study that found that 61 percent of regularly attending Christians, 55 percent of non-practicing Christians, and 55 percent of non-Christians were all interested in having deep and meaningful conversations about matters of faith.

That same study found that one out of three adults in North America have made major life changes because of conversations they have had with someone else who was willing to talk about their faith.

One out of three, major life changes. All it takes is to trust what we believe and apply it in life. Let's not make this harder than it is. The heart of the Father is to love and to save His world. The heart of our mission is to be used by God as instruments to carry out His loving and saving work.

In a day and age like today, the calling and commission we've been given are as needed as ever. We exist, as a Church, for no other reason than to call people to faith, by pointing them, with our words and by our deeds, to the living Christ.

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## Continued from Page 14

And so, let me close with this. Three things: a few quotes, all relating to our calling and our theme; a few words about where this mission convocation is being held; and, finally, a few closing comments to tie it all together. First, the quotes.

From John Piper: “If you can’t see the sun, you will be impressed with a streetlight. If you’ve never felt thunder and lightning, you’ll be impressed with fireworks. And if you turn your back on the greatness and majesty of God, and forget about its implications for your life, you’ll fall in love with a world of shadows and short-lived pleasures.”

From Charles Spurgeon: “We cannot always trace God’s creating hand, but we can always trust God’s loving heart.”

From Martin Luther: “A Christian is never in a state of completion but always in a process of becoming. We are not yet what we shall be, but God is not yet finished.”

And from C. S. Lewis: “Don’t shine so that others can see you. Shine so that through you, others can see Him.”

Those are the quotes.

Now, a word about this place. Our mission convocation, this year, is being held in the city of Corpus Christi. Corpus Christi, the surrounding bay, was given its name by the Spanish explorer, Alonso Alvarez de Pineda, who discovered it in 1519. He named it for the church holiday on which it was discovered, Corpus Christi. That holiday falls 60 days after Easter. This year it was on June 3. In the early 1800s, the city itself was given the same name.

In ecclesiastical Latin, *Corpus Christi* means “Body of Christ,” in reference to the Christian Sacrament of Holy Communion. A fitting place for our mission convocation to be held.

And now, the closing comments. “God the Father Creates.” Let us never take for granted that fundamental and foundational truth. “God so loved the world that He gave His only Son.” Let us never

lose sight of the fact that we are of infinite value and worth to God, and our salvation is secure eternally in Christ. And that one little word, “therefore.” Let us never forget that we are here for a purpose and let us never fail in giving that purpose, and the One who gave it to us, our best.

We are here for a reason, as the Body of Christ, to tell and to proclaim and to make known to the world how much they are loved in Jesus. Amen.

# BISHOP’S REPORT

## Continued from Page 10

When it comes to the political landscape of our countries, we need to walk carefully. There are a lot of explosive mines in the field. At the same time, we cannot back off on the positions we have taken and the biblical authority on which we stand, especially when it comes to issues related to the sanctity of life, the authority of God’s Word, marriage and the family and religious freedom. I’d ask for your prayers as we seek to be faithful in a culture and a political climate that is changing every day.

Finally, in my second year as bishop, in spite of the challenges we have faced, I remain confident that the future that lies ahead of us in the North American Lutheran Church is one that will be blessed by our ever-creating God. Thank you to each of you, my sisters and brothers in Christ, for the opportunity you have given me to serve in this role.

As I shared when I was first elected and will continue to share until the day my tenure ends, this is not about me or about us. It is about the calling we have in Jesus, the commission we have been given in Christ, the ministry and work we share, and the service we offer to the world for which our Lord Jesus died. He is our message. He has given us our mandate. He is our source of salvation and our reason for hope.

It remains an honor for me to serve as your bishop. May God continue to bless each of you, as together we serve, and together we are used by the God who continues to create and give new life.

# FLOODING DAMAGES MEKANE YESUS SEMINARY IN ETHIOPIA, EIGHT PEOPLE DIE AT SEMINARY

The seminary of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) in Addis Ababa was severely damaged by a flash flood that left death and destruction in its wake. The Aug. 17 flood killed three children and five adults at the seminary and displaced more than 98 people.

The Akaki River, which borders the seminary campus, rose rapidly and overflowed an earthen dike protecting the seminary. As the dike failed, waters rose quickly in the lower parts of campus, flooding that area in a matter of minutes.

The river rose six feet in three minutes. There was no warning, so students and faculty did not have time to get out. Many people survived by getting on the roofs of the buildings.

Church officials reported that a large part of the institution was badly damaged, including staff residences for both international and national missionaries. Those impacted lost all their personal belongings.

Initial estimates are that more than \$2.5 million will be needed to rebuild, relocate impacted families and



**Flash flooding at the Mekane Yesus Seminary**

install flood protection systems. About 21 buildings and roads leading to the seminary were badly damaged.

“This is a catastrophic, heartbreaking and unprecedented disaster that has resulted in the loss of lives, destruction and displacement of our people,” said Rev. Dr. Bruk Ayele Asale, president of the seminary. “We are in an emergency.”



Those who would like to help with building and rebuilding efforts at the seminary may send gifts in care of the North American Lutheran Church, PO Box 860565, Minneapolis, MN 55486-0565. Please indicate “EECMY” on the memo line.

The construction of a new building for the seminary was not affected by the flooding because it is on higher ground. See the July 2021 and December 2020 NALC News for information on the building project.



# A CALL TO PRAYER FOR ETHIOPIA AND EECMY

The 2021 NALC Mission Convocation unanimously approved a resolution inviting NALC pastors, congregations and members to unite in “intentional and intensive prayer for Ethiopia.”

NALC is in a full-communion relationship with the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), the largest Lutheran church in the world.

The Rev. Dr. Yonas Yigezu, president of the EECMY, provided a video greeting to the convocation. In the greeting, he requested prayer as Ethiopia has suffered considerable unrest and violence. This has been a significant burden during this time of a worldwide pandemic and now, flooding in Ethiopia has caused deaths and destruction at the Mekane Yesus Seminary.

Together with that prayer, we also now request that additional prayers be added for healing and restoration after the recent flooding. Please consider this an invitation to every pastor,



***The Rev. Dr. Gemechis Buba, NALC assistant to the bishop for missions and a graduate of the Mekane Yesus Seminary, visited the seminary in September following the August flooding. He embodied and shared the love and concern of the NALC for the seminary and the people of the EECMY.***

congregation and member of the NALC to engage in “intentional and intensive prayer” in worship and in personal devotional time, for the sake of the EECMY, Mekane Yesus Seminary, President Yonas and our brothers and sisters in Ethiopia.

Following is the text of the letter sent by NALC Bishop Dan Selbo to the Rev. Dr. Yonas Yigezu, president of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY).

Dear brother in Christ,

Grace to you and peace in the name of our Triune God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit!



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We greet you and all the saints who are the Body of Christ in EECMY. We pray that as we struggle, together, through this worldwide pandemic that the Lord is bringing healing, strength and peace to the people of Ethiopia.

We give thanks for your public greeting, on behalf of EECMY, to our 2021 NALC Mission Convocation. We were reminded of the fond affection and bond which exists between our two church bodies, hindered in some ways by COVID-19. At the same time, we were reassured that even this deadly virus could not keep us from remaining united in Christ Jesus across these many miles!

Yet even now, we are saddened to have been informed of the great flooding which has so dramatically impacted EECMY and the Mekane Yesus Seminary. We grieve the loss of life, the pain and difficulty of those who have lost loved ones and, certainly, the destruction to the property which is so instrumental to the theological education and formation of those who will serve EECMY.

Because you asked for prayer in your greeting, a resolution was presented to our convocation and was approved unanimously. It stated, in part:

*Whereas our full communion partnership agreement commits us to praying for one another;*

*Therefore, be it resolved that the NALC, in convocation, will offer prayer for these intentions during our gathering, will invite every pastor, congregation and member to enter into intentional and intensive prayer for Ethiopia;*

*And be it further resolved that the bishop of the NALC together with executive staff, prepare a letter to be sent to President Yigezu assuring him of the love, concern and prayers of their brothers and sisters in the NALC.*

I write, today, to fulfill that prayerful and heartfelt directive. We will also be inviting “every pastor, congregation and member to enter into intentional and intensive prayer for Ethiopia” in upcoming newsletter (and email). Upon approval of this resolution, the following prayer was offered at convocation by Chaplain, Pastor Nila Cogan:



**Flood damage at the Mekane Yesus Seminary**

*Merciful and gracious God, we ask for your healing hand to be with the people of Ethiopia, especially in the Northern Tigray Region. Be with all who suffer from the conflict, for the families of the thousands who have died, for the 1.7 million who fled their homes and for those who face famine and despair. May the people feel your presence, Lord, as they go through these troubled times. May you send peace and healing to them all. Lord, in your mercy, we pray. Amen.*

Together with that prayer, we also now will be adding prayers for healing and restoration after the recent flooding.

Be assured of our ongoing love for and appreciation of EECMY, its leaders, pastors, congregations and laity as you have been shining light in the midst of a world all too ready to embrace the darkness of unbelief, ungodliness, biblical ignorance and secularization. We know that you will continue to stand firmly and faithfully upon the unchanged and unchanging Word of God, the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ as the only Way, Truth and Life, and the Great Commandment and the Great Commission! We look forward to that time when we will once again meet, pray and worship together, in person, as one family in Christ. Until that time, please pray for us as well!

In Christ,

**The Rev. Dr. Daniel W. Selbo, Bishop**  
The North American Lutheran Church



# SMALL AND RURAL CHURCHES MATTER

There is always a danger in focusing on particular vacant congregations in the *Ministry Matters* articles. When calling out one or two congregations in need of pastoral candidates, other congregations email asking, "What about us?"

Every NALC congregation with a vacancy is important and worthy of prayerful consideration.

The NALC vacancy list is regularly updated and may be found on the NALC website at [thenalc.org/call](http://thenalc.org/call). We encourage all pastors to prayerfully seek the Holy Spirit's guidance with regard to our vacant congregations. It takes all working together, congregations, call committees, pastors and deans to provide pastoral support for every NALC congregation.

At the same time, it is worth mentioning our Great Rivers Mission District which currently has eight vacancies, most of them small, small-town and rural congregations. With so many vacancies in one area of the United States, it is a challenge to draw attention to each of the congregations. While mentioning, in particular, these eight congregations, this focus allows us to draw attention to every congregation in the NALC which may be offering small church, small-town and rural ministry.



**St. John Lutheran Church in Metropolis, Illinois**



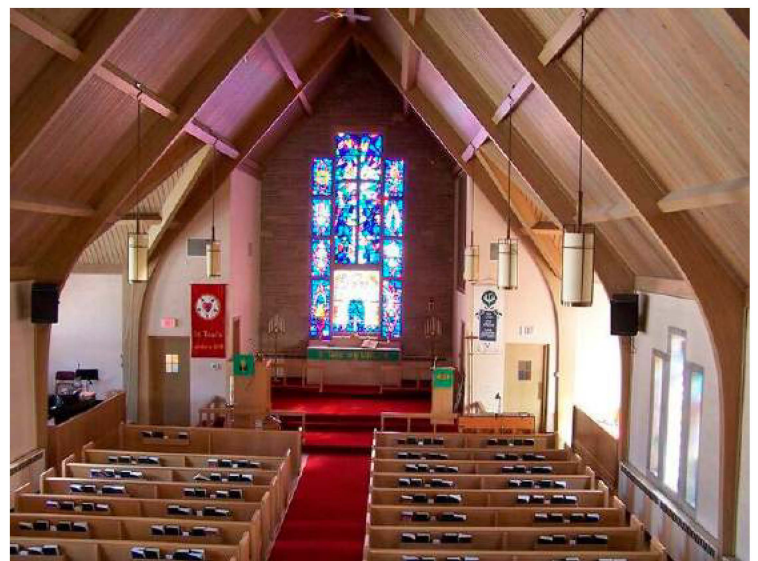
## MINISTRY MATTERS

**REV. DR. DAVID WENDEL**  
ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP  
FOR MINISTRY AND ECUMENISM

While often dismissed as "fly-over states," the North American Lutheran Church recognizes and celebrates our many small-town and rural congregations as the heart and soul of mission and ministry. In fact, we offer an online course titled, "The Small and Rural Church; A Future of Hope!" The introduction on the NALC website states:

*It's not about the size, but the relationships. And the small, rural church is truly vital today because of these relationships. Come and experience how these congregations can grow and witness even more by deepening their relationships with Jesus, one another*

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**St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church in Oregon, Illinois**



and the community. We invite you to use this resource, written by Pastor Brad Hales.

You can find this online course on the NALC website at [thenalc.org/afutureofhope](http://thenalc.org/afutureofhope). The course will help you learn more about the special ministry of small and rural church mission, revitalization and renewal – leading to hope for the future!

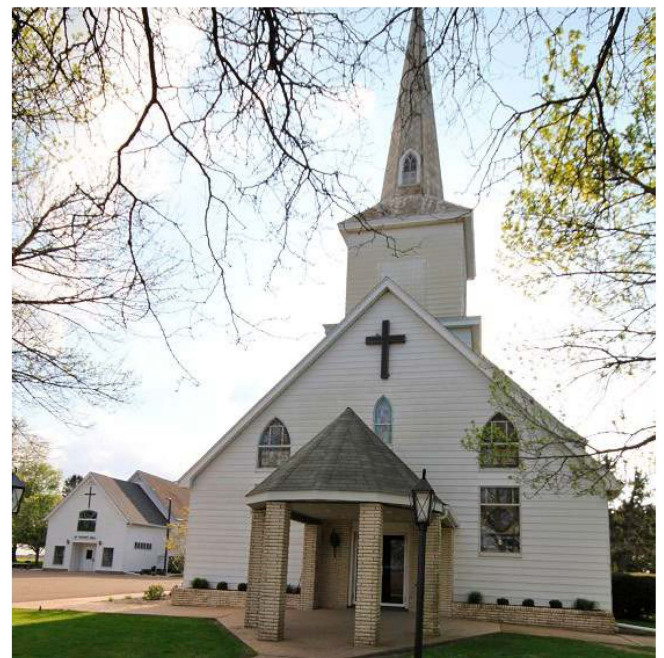
This hope is discussed by Thom Rainer of [churchanswers.com](http://churchanswers.com) in his article, “Five Reasons Rural and Small-Town Churches are Making a Comeback.” He points out:

1. The migration trend from these less populated areas has reversed.
2. There are a lot of people in rural and small-town areas.
3. More church leaders are expressing a calling to rural churches and small-town churches.
4. More church leaders are serious about rooting themselves and their families in these communities and churches.
5. The simpler life of rural or small-town areas is becoming increasingly attractive to many people, including church leaders.

Please spend a few minutes reviewing the profiles of these Great Rivers Mission District congregations in Illinois which are vacant and offer a prayer for each, that God will lead them to a new pastor. And, pastors, prayerfully consider serving one of our small, small-town and rural congregations throughout the NALC which offer so much in terms of loving, caring relationships, resilience, participation and well-grounded faithfulness in Christ Jesus.



**St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cullom, Illinois**



**St. Peter Lutheran Church in Benson, Illinois**

If you would like to learn more about ministry in the Great Rivers Mission District, either as a full or part-time called pastor or interim, contact the Rev. Jim Lehmann, dean of the Great Rivers Mission District at [jtl611@hotmail.com](mailto:jtl611@hotmail.com) or 217-694-4156.

Current vacancies in Illinois are: St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Cullom; Trinity Lutheran Church, Shumway; St. John Lutheran Church, Metropolis; St. Peter Lutheran Church, Benson; St. John's Lutheran Church, Danforth; First Lutheran Church, Kirkland; St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Oregon and Zion Lutheran Church, Philo.

Together with those, New Beginnings Lutheran Church in Mahomet, Illinois, is newly vacant and several non-NALC Lutheran congregations are transitioning into the NALC while vacant.

And, in neighboring Iowa, keep in mind Samuel Lutheran Church, Eagle Grove; Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Grafton and St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church Vilmar, in Greene, Iowa.

**Pastor David Wendel is the assistant to the bishop for ministry and ecumenism. You may contact him at [dwendel@thenalc.org](mailto:dwendel@thenalc.org).**



# NALC DISASTER RESPONSE HURRICANE IDA UPDATE

Hurricane Ida slammed into the Louisiana coast on Aug. 29 – 16 years to the day after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans.

Some families have lost loved ones, many homes are flooded, temperatures are soaring, millions are without power – and they still could be weeks from now according to officials. So many in Louisiana need the hope of Jesus Christ.

NALC Disaster Response has delivered eight truckloads to Louisiana and the four-stall shower trailer was delivered to Metairie, Louisiana.

NALC Disaster Response is also working in Elmer, New Jersey, to help with the response to a tornado caused by Hurricane Ida. Two truck loads of emergency relief supplies were distributed.

Your prayers and support are needed. Please collect gift cards and emergency relief supplies as soon as possible. Contact Mary Bates, NALC Disaster Response coordinator, at 740-509-1132 if you can help.



Donations for NALC Disaster Response may be given online at [thenalc.org/giving](https://thenalc.org/giving) or sent to:

North American Lutheran Church  
PO Box 860565  
Minneapolis, MN 55486-0565

Please indicate Disaster Response on the memo line.



# ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES RECOGNIZED AT CONVOCATION

## 20 Years

The Rev. Gemechis Desta Buba  
The Rev. Cathy A. Fanslau  
The Rev. Evelyn Johnson  
The Rev. Bjoern Meinhardt  
The Rev. Paula L. Murray  
The Rev. Lisa L. Peterson  
The Rev. Christinia A. Seibel  
The Rev. Ernest B. Sheldon  
The Rev. Eric Waters

## 25 Years

The Rev. Daniel David Baker  
The Rev. Jeffrey T. Cottingham  
The Rev. Dwight John Hanson  
The Rev. Roger G. Keller  
The Rev. Charles H. Lashley  
The Rev. Jeffrey J. Lee  
The Rev. Timothy Lundeen  
The Rev. Jean Rabary  
The Rev. Shelly D. Schultz  
The Rev. Hilbert A. Schultz  
The Rev. Christopher B. Staley  
The Rev. Paul M. Strom  
The Rev. Mark E. Wilhelm

## 30 Years

The Rev. Franz Joseph  
    Brandenburg  
The Rev. Daniel W. Cave  
The Rev. Alex A. Chartier  
The Rev. John T. Conrad  
The Rev. Sara Ann Gausmann  
The Rev. Steven J. Hartten  
The Rev. William C. Heber Jr.  
The Rev. Daniel Hendrickson  
The Rev. Thomas J. Hux  
The Rev. Mark A. Kindem  
The Rev. Eric C. Meissner  
The Rev. Kevin Ree  
The Rev. Norman J. Sulaica Jr.

## 35 Years

The Rev. Scott W. Baker  
The Rev. Scott F. Berner  
The Rev. Randall A. Cauble  
The Rev. Jarrod Lanning  
The Rev. Rodney W. Lilley  
The Rev. Jeffrey David Messner  
The Rev. John Moffett  
The Rev. K. Craig Moorman  
The Rev. Bryan R. Salminen  
The Rev. Lewis Samuel Scheiderer  
The Rev. Daniel W. Selbo  
The Rev. Raymond E. Short  
The Rev. H. Brian Triller

## 40 Years

The Rev. Mark H. Braaten  
The Rev. Donald M. Brandt  
The Rev. Thomas M. Brodbeck  
The Rev. Kenneth A. Comstock  
The Rev. Henry Andrew Corcoran  
The Rev. Matthew Cox  
The Rev. Keith H. Eslinger  
The Rev. Preston Bennett Foster  
The Rev. Peter V. Gundersen  
The Rev. Daniel Hansen  
The Rev. Roy A. Harrisville III  
The Rev. William Hecht  
The Rev. Gregory B. Held  
The Rev. Gerald Norman Kaskela  
The Rev. John W. Krueger  
The Rev. John M. Kulczycki  
The Rev. Simon Wing-Shing Lee  
The Rev. Philip Lee  
The Rev. Kurt Erik Luebke  
The Rev. Pentti J. Maki  
The Rev. Don L. Neumann  
The Rev. Robert H. Quaintance  
The Rev. John Saethre  
The Rev. Jonathan D. Sorum  
The Rev. Sandra S. Soye  
The Rev. David M. Wendel  
The Rev. Samuel Zumwalt Jr.

## 45 Years

The Rev. Gabriel Baxter  
    Baumgardner  
The Rev. Bruce E. Foster  
The Rev. Michael Gabby  
The Rev. Douglas C. Gast  
The Rev. N. Amanda Grimmer  
The Rev. John W. Harmon  
The Rev. Justin P. Kollmeyer  
The Rev. James R. Palan  
The Rev. Ann Miller Smith  
The Rev. Michael G. Tavella

## 50 Years

The Rev. John Bauer  
The Rev. Robert Groenke, Jr.  
The Rev. Philip Gronbach  
The Rev. Kenneth Hauge  
The Rev. George Mathews Jr.  
The Rev. Thomas McCrone  
The Rev. James Neal  
The Rev. James Nestingen  
The Rev. Kenneth Schott II  
The Rev. Wayne Strohschein  
The Rev. Alan Williams

## 55 Years

The Rev. Norman Albertson  
The Rev. James DeLong  
The Rev. Ray Rosenthal  
The Rev. Bruce Welander

## 60 Years

The Rev. Harvey Blume  
The Rev. Ronald Schmidt

## 70 Years

The Rev. Thurmond Plexico



# CONGREGATION ANNIVERSARIES RECOGNIZED AT CONVOCATION

## 100 Years (founded in 1921)

First English Lutheran Church, Marysville, Ohio  
First English Ev. Lutheran Church, Baker City, Oregon  
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Whitewood, South Dakota

## 125 Years (founded in 1896)

Glen Flora Lutheran Church, Glen Flora, Wisconsin  
St. Peter Lutheran Church, Doss, Texas  
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Runge, Texas

## 150 Years (founded in 1871)

Christina Lake Lutheran Church, Evansville, Minnesota  
Christiana Lutheran Church, Salisbury, North Carolina  
St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church, Cullom, Illinois  
St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Millersburg, Pennsylvania

## 175 Years (founded in 1846)

Holy Ghost Lutheran Church, Fredericksburg, Texas

## 250 Years (founded in 1771)

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Seven Valleys, Pennsylvania

# YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

*By Laurie Pecuch*

The school year is upon us!

Check out our autumn postings beginning on Facebook at NALC Youth Workers or [faithwebbing.com](http://faithwebbing.com) and our faithwebbing YouTube channel.

We are happy to announce that the log-in feature to the [faithwebbing.com](http://faithwebbing.com) website has been removed.

The website is made up of four sections: "For Churches," "Personal Growth," "Trot Through the Bible" and "Verses to Live By." This month we are highlighting the "For Churches" section.

This section is for those who are developing a ministry to young people. It contains more than 80 video clips, 50 templates and forms, including 20 questions to answer, philosophies of ministry, models of ministry, safeguarding best practice systems, pages for moms and dads and basically everything you need to further develop your ministry to young people.

Contact us if you wish to be added to the monthly email blast list.

**Laurie Pecuch serves the NALC as a youth ministry coach. You may contact her at [families@thenalc.org](mailto:families@thenalc.org) or [faithwebbing@gmail.com](mailto:faithwebbing@gmail.com).**

## Let's keep in touch

Rev. Dr. David J. Baer, *editor*  
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**NALC**  
North American Lutheran Church

Please copy and share this newsletter widely.

# NALC CONGREGATIONS TO CONSIDER WHETHER TO RATIFY CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

The congregations of the North American Lutheran Church are considering whether to ratify amendments to the NALC Constitution that were approved by the 2021 NALC Mission Convocation.

The proposed amendments to the constitution officially name regional subdivisions within the NALC as “mission districts” and “mission regions.”

An amendment also adds constitutional language allowing mission districts to form mission regions.

These amendments reflect the current practice of the NALC and its mission districts and mission regions. They update constitutional language to reflect this practice.

“One of the NALC’s Core Values is ‘Congregationally Focused.’ Congregational participation is a foundational principle of our church body’s

governance. By requiring congregational ratification of certain key decisions, the NALC ensures that its members are aware of and broadly supportive of those decisions,” the Executive Council states in a letter to congregations on the ratification process.

Amendments approved by a convocation must be ratified within six months of the conclusion of the convocation by a two-thirds majority of NALC congregations voting on the amendments. At least half of NALC congregations must vote on whether or not to ratify the amendments for the ratification vote to be valid.

The deadline for voting on ratification is Feb. 6, 2022 – six months after the convocation.

Information on the ratification process – including the exact text of the proposed amendments – is available at [thenalc.org/ratificationprocess](https://thenalc.org/ratificationprocess).

## Martin Luther’s Theology of Beauty: A Reappraisal IS FOCUS OF “NALS READS”

The North American Lutheran Seminary is sponsoring a four-part Zoom conversation on the second Tuesday of each month. The discussion, called “NALS Reads,” will be facilitated by the Rev. Dr. Maurice Lee on *Martin Luther’s Theology of Beauty: A Reappraisal*, by the Rev. Dr. Mark C. Mattes.

This is a free opportunity to sharpen your theological skills. Participants are only asked to provide their own book for discussion.

For more information or to register go to [thenalc.org/nalsreads](https://thenalc.org/nalsreads).

